



Michigan  
*Office of the Auditor General*  
**REPORT SUMMARY**

*Performance Audit*

*Vital Records and Health Data Statistics*  
*Bureau of Epidemiology*  
*Department of Community Health*

Report Number:  
39-145-04

Released:  
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*The Bureau of Epidemiology's Division for Vital Records and Health Statistics processes customer requests for vital records and changes to vital record information, compiles health data, and provides information to the public. The Bureau's Epidemiology Services Division accepts vital records from local registrars, extracts data from vital records, develops data pools, creates and maintains statistical reports, and provides information to the National Center for Health Statistics and to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*

***Audit Objective:***

To assess the Bureau's effectiveness in safeguarding vital records and health data.

***Audit Conclusion:***

We concluded that the Bureau was somewhat effective in safeguarding vital records and health data.

***Material Conditions:***

The Bureau did not periodically review the controls of local registrar offices or hospitals to ensure that these local units had sufficient safeguards over vital records, safety paper, or blank documents used to generate vital records (Finding 1).

The Bureau did not retrieve vital records in the possession of local clerk offices that no longer had the authority to accept or issue those documents (Finding 2).

***Reportable Conditions:***

The Bureau did not retain all documentation to support changes to vital records or customer requests for information consistent with established retention periods (Finding 3).

The Bureau did not require periodic inspections of contractors responsible for microfilming and data entry of vital records to ensure that the contractors properly secured the vital records that were in their possession (Finding 4).

The Bureau did not have controls to ensure that applications for high-risk delayed registrations of birth were notarized or that Bureau management reviewed these applications (Finding 5).

The Bureau did not monitor the environmental conditions within its Lansing vault used to store vital records (Finding 6).

The Bureau did not maintain security agreements for all individuals who had access to the Central Paternity Registry (CPR) database. Also, the Bureau did not monitor usage of the CPR database. (Finding 7)

The Bureau did not preserve all vital record information on microfilm for inclusion into the Bureau's archive files. Also, the

Bureau did not perform periodic physical inventories of its backup and archival microfilm. (Finding 8)

The Bureau did not periodically inspect backup and archival microfilm records to ensure that they were in satisfactory condition (Finding 9).

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***Audit Objective:***

To assess the Bureau's effectiveness and efficiency in providing vital record information and health related data.

***Audit Conclusion:***

We concluded that the Bureau was generally effective and efficient in providing vital record information and health related data.

***Noteworthy Accomplishments:***

In March 2003, the Bureau implemented the Birth Registry System to register live births, accumulate data related to births, identify the location of birth records, and issue certified copies of requested birth records. As a result, the Bureau has significantly improved the timeliness for processing customer requests.

The Bureau has placed the Electronic Birth Certificate System in all obstetrics hospitals in Michigan to allow hospitals to report live births electronically.

In March 2004, the Bureau's Michigan Cancer Surveillance Program attained a certified gold standard from the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries for the quality, completeness, and timeliness of cancer information.

***Reportable Conditions:***

The Bureau did not report health data related to live births in accordance with National Center for Health Statistics requirements (Finding 10).

The Bureau did not have up-to-date written operating policies and procedures (Finding 11).

***Agency Response:***

Our audit report contains 11 findings and 13 corresponding recommendations. The Bureau's preliminary response indicated that the Bureau generally agreed with the 13 recommendations.

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A copy of the full report can be obtained by calling 517.334.8050 or by visiting our Web site at: <http://audgen.michigan.gov>



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